



TOWN OF UPTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Economic Development Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: February 8, 2021

Location: Remote

A: Call to Order

Having a quorum, the meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm

B: In Attendance

Committee Members

- Gene Bernat – NOT PRESENT
- David Brooks
- Donna Desjardins
- Steven Rakitin
- Dave Ross - Chair
- Craig Weinfuss
- Katherine Worsham

Guests: Kelly McElreath, Town Clerk and Assistant to Town Manager
Paul Dell'Aquila, Economic Development Coordinator/Town Planner

C: Discussion

1. Agenda and Minutes

The committee approved the agenda and meeting minutes from January 25th.

2. Update from Paul Dell'Aquila ED Coordinator/Town Planner

State Rapid Recovery Grant for consultant help should be awarded to the town. This grant can be used for Upton Center re-development.

State is establishing a one-stop program by combining 10 programs from several areas to allow communities to more easily apply through one portal for grants from various programs. Could be up and running by May-June. Towns could submit summaries when applying for multiple grants.

Paul will prepare a summary of town's top five needs that could be used for future applications. Paul will have a list for discussion at our next meeting.

As an agenda topic for next meeting – the committee will rank top 5 needs.

CMRPC can provide some technical assistance hours that the town earns every year. So far, we have earned 13 hours. The Planning Board has discretion on the use of those hours. Have to be used by June 30th.

We discussed projects like digitizing the DPW drawings that show the locations of water and sewer lines as well as locating gas lines and power lines throughout the town. Paul will be meeting with Planning Board tomorrow to see if they have any use for these hours.

Brewery update – long-term plan is to demolish other buildings and create a beer garden patio. They need to bring any proposed building demo to the Historical Commission per Demo By-law. They need to discuss this patio with the Conservation Agent since it is close to Center Brook. Short term, they are working on asking BoS for permission for outdoor seating in the spring..

There are several By-law renumbering articles on ATM warrant. Paul to investigate.

3. Updates From Project Leads on Items Related to Goals in the ED Plan

- Steve – presented a draft for an EDC Web site
- Steve / Donna – presented a draft Small Business Guide – Shrewsbury example
- Donna – created a Commercial Property listing from MLS

4. Set Next Meeting Date

Monday March 8, 2021 @ 7pm.

5. Other topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance.

Dave mentioned - Town is looking to replace Grove Street culvert over Center Brook. Paul indicated there are state grants for culvert replacement but they need to be shovel-ready.

6. Audience Participation

None.

7. Look ahead topics

- a. Top five town needs
- b. Design Standards (Draft 7 may be latest)
- c. RFP Editing and Issuance (Dave R. to share)
- d. Rte 140 TIP Project – 25% Design Complete public hearing may be Q1 2021

D: Committee Actions and Action Items

1. A motion was made and seconded to approve tonight's agenda and meeting minutes from January 25th 2021. Motion was approved by unanimous vote of the members present.

E: Next Meeting

Next meeting is scheduled for March 8, 2021 at 7pm.

F: Meeting Adjourned

Upon unanimous vote of the members present, the meeting was adjourned at 8:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Steven R. Rakitin
Clerk

EDC COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

GOAL 1: IMPLEMENT UPTON CENTER REVITALIZATION

1	Action Plans	Responsible Parties	Time Frame	EDC Members
1.1	Use a business and resident needs survey to help develop plans for the second phase of Upton Center Revitalization Project.	EDC Town Planner	2021	Gene
1.2	Use the survey data to create a new Request for Proposals (RFP) for Upton Center Revitalization. Post a revised RFP to the Central Register.	EDC Town Planner	2021	Gene, Craig, Katherine
1.3	Support development of the Community Center at May Town Meeting (Library/Senior Center).	EDC and CCBC	May 2021	Committee
1.4	Coordinate with MA DOT District 3 on Rte. 140 TIP Project to minimize impact with potential Community Center and Upton Center development projects.	EDC, DPW, Town Planner	2021-2022	Steve, Gene
1.5	Work with DPW on the Complete Streets Prioritization Plan for Upton Center.	EDC and DPW	2021	Dave R., David B.

GOAL 2: IDENTIFY POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS FOR WEST UPTON CENTER

2	Action Plans	Responsible Parties	Time Frame	EDC Members
2.1	Review current zoning by-laws in West Upton Center. Determine if there are any by-laws that should be updated.	EDC, Planning Board, Town Planner	2021	Steve
2.2	Create design guidelines for West Upton Center similar to those created for Upton Center.	EDC, Planning Board, Town Planner	2022	Craig, Katherine
2.3	Coordinate with MassDOT District 3 on Hartford Ave/High Street TIP Project and keep residents informed of project impact.	EDC, DPW, Town Planner	2021	Steve, Gene
2.4	Review Complete Streets Prioritization Plan in West Upton Center.	EDC, DPW, Town Planner	2022	Dave R. and David B.
2.5	Coordinate with MassDOT District 3 on the Rte 140 TIP project to assess impact to West Upton Center.	EDC, DPW, Town Planner	2022	Steve, Gene

GOAL 3: STREAMLINE MUNICIPAL PROCEDURES

3	Action Plans	Responsible Parties	Time Frame	EDC Members
3.1	Add an Economic Development page to the Town Website	EDC and Technology Committee	2021	Steve, Dave R.
3.2	Create an Upton Small Business resource guide to help small businesses that want to locate in Upton.	EDC and Town Planner	2021	Steve, Donna
3.3	Enhance online permitting software currently being used by the Town of Upton.	EDC and various town departments	2022	Steve, David B.
3.4	Create business reviews board to meeting periodically to assist in the process of starting a business and also helping with any assistance that might be needed by and existing business in Upton.	EDC and Town Manager	2022	Paul, Donna

GOAL 4: FOSTER BUSINESS GROWTH

4	Action Plans	Responsible Parties	Time Frame	EDC Members
4.1	Inventory existing businesses and vacancies in commercial and industrial zones to determine mix, needs, and opportunities.	EDC and local realtors	2023	Donna, Gene
4.2	Conduct a study of infrastructure needs throughout Upton.	EDC and town departments	2023	Gene
4.3	Promote the use of vacant buildings as business incubators.	EDC and local realtors	2022	Gene, Craig
4.4	Update list of small business and home business listings and post/maintain listing on town website.	EDC	2022	Steve Help from Grant?
4.5	Promote creation of a small business association and encourage business owners to participate.	EDC and local business leaders	2023	Gene
4.6	Consider CMRPC Brownfields Program for any necessary remediation of commercial/ industrial property.	EDC and Town Planner	2023	Gene
4.7	Work with Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce to host a local Upton Business Roundtable.	EDC and Town Planner	2022	Steve
4.8	Work with local businesses on hosting an annual Small Business Fair.	EDC and local businesses	2022	Steve, Craig

GOAL 5: LEVERAGE EXISTING CULTURAL RESOURCES AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

5	Action Plans	Responsible Parties	Time Frame	EDC Members
5.1	Leverage existing State Forest Land and town conservation land to help transform Upton into an eco-tourism destination.	EDC, Open Space Committee, Land Stewardship Com	3-5 years	Gene
5.2	Explore expanding existing Walking Tour of Upton to include Milhaus, Town Hall, Bradish House and other historical sites.	EDC, Historical Commission, Historical Society	3-5 years	Gene, Katherine, Craig
5.3	Develop a commuter survey for Upton residents to determine commuting patterns.	EDC and CMRPC	2022	Steve, David B.
5.4	Determine if and how a local Regional Transit Authority service could benefit Upton residents.	EDC and Town Planner	3+ years	Steve, David B., Gene
5.5	Assess feasibility of creating a transit hub. Identify potential State resources that could help.	EDC and ?	5+ years	Steve, Gene
5.6	Identify potential sites suitable for large-scale solar energy battery storage and data centers.	EDC and ?	3-5 years	Steve, Gene